(b) the steps taken to clear the wait-listed applications; and

(c) by when, the list would be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) A total of 14024 applicants are in waiting list for telephone connections in Madhya Pradesh as on 31st October, 2003, out of which 11612 are in rural areas. Most of the rural waiting list is in the far flung areas.

(b) and (c) BSNL has planned to provide 1,06,000 DELs (Direct Exchange Lines) during 2003-2004 on wired Line and WLL, of which 25,000 are in rural areas. Most of the waiting list is expected to be cleared progressively by the end of current financial year subject to availability of resources.

Telecom facilities in rural areas of Bhopal

205. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to provide public telephone facilities including Fax/STD/ISD etc. in the rural areas of Bhopal district of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Sir, STD/ISD public telephones are already working in rural areas of Bhopal district of Madhya Pradesh. The franchisees are at liberty to install fax machines on their STD/ISD PCOs to provide fax services.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Introduction of Mobile phones for Tripura

206. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) by when, mobile phones would be introduced in Tripura;